

TOWNSHIP OF WOODBRIDGE

NEW JERSEY

1669-1781

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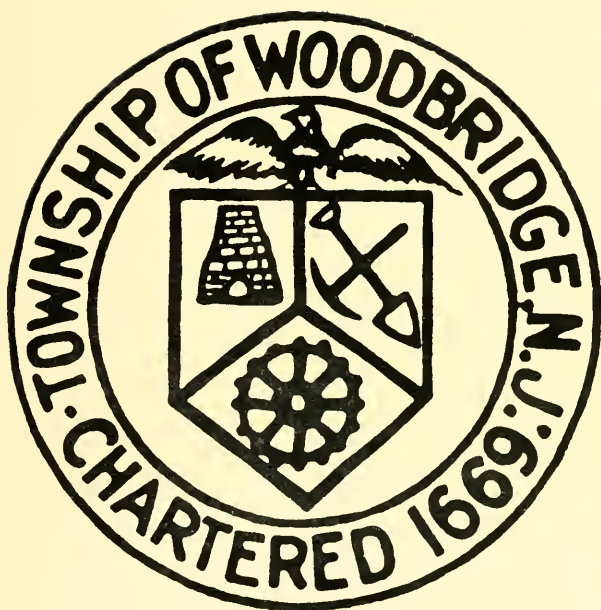
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TOWNSHIP OF WOODBRIDGE

NEW JERSEY

1669-1781

JOHN M. KREGER, *author*

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FOREWORD

The purpose of this booklet is to increase the knowledge of thousands of our town residents who are unacquainted with the history of the period from 1669, when Woodbridge received its Charter from Great Britian, to 1781, the Termination of the Revolutionary War and our subsequent independence from Britian.

Furthermore, we wish to acquaint our Township folks with conditions in Woodbridge during the Revolutionary War — the plight of our loyal Colonists and the battles and skirmishes fought within the Township boundaries.

There are several date deviations from the period 1669 to 1781 in this booklet. They are deliberate deviations; first, certain matters prior to 1669 are necessarily mentioned because they were introductory to what happened in 1669. Also in the Chapter pertaining to Religion, events occuring after 1669 are recorded purposely so that all forms of Religion as found in our Township would be noted.

This booklet presents numerous quotes from authors who have published in years gone by volumes covering the history of early Woodbridge. Some of these writings are "out of print". Hence references from said writings are liberally quoted herein.

It is hoped that contents of this booklet will not only arouse interest in the many incidents and situations narrated herein, but also instil a large measure of pride in the accomplishments of the earliest settlers of our Township.

JOHN M. KREGER, *author*

DEDICATION

This booklet is dedicated to Joseph P. Somers, Chairman of the Township of Woodbridge Bi Centennial Committee.

Only a few persons, other than the Bi Centennial Committee members are aware of the many, arduous hours Joe has devoted to advancing the work accomplished.

A notable example of his effort is the erection of the duplicate of the James Parker Print Shop. Parker, a Woodbridge resident, was the first native-born Jerseyian printer in our State. His print shop was located on what is now the parking lot for St. James Roman Catholic Church.

Having been refused financial aid by the State Bi Centennial Committee in Trenton, Joe rolled up his sleeves and went to work with determination and vigor. Enlisting aid and cooperation from local labor unions, contractors, supply houses and labor, there arose as "over night" the duplicate of the 18th century print shop of James Parker.

As the years pass, this attractive structure will attract increasing attention by local residents and out of town visitors, bringing a measure of pride and satisfaction to our entire Township.

Joe, congratulations on a job, well done.

JOHN M. KREGER, *author*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION — HOW WOODBRIDGE RECEIVED ITS NAME

No City, Township or Community of any size should feel more honored in this Bi-Centennial year of 1976 than the Township of Woodbridge, New Jersey.

Why do we make this statement? For the very true fact is that our Township had an active part in the Declaration of Independence and the Revolutionary War which severed the original thirteen Colonies from the control and domination of the British Crown.

As a matter of historical fact the Township of Woodbridge had its beginning over one hundred years prior to the Declaration of Independence.

It is believed that there is no spot in our nation so replete with historic lore than our town of Woodbridge.

The early history of New Jersey was closely tied to the rivalry for overseas possession between European nations during the so-called "Age of Exploration." In the seventeenth century, three powers, England, Sweden and Holland, established settlements in the Middle Atlantic area of what is now the United States.

England believed it had first claim to this territory. In 1498, only six years after Columbus discovered America, Cabot, an Italian explorer, in the employ of England had sailed along the Atlantic coast of North America, and claimed all of the land for his employer, England.

The English delayed over a century of time before taking any action to claim or settle any part of this land.

During the so-called "Age of Exploration" the English settled at Jamestown, Virginia in 1607, and at Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1620.

The Hollanders or Dutch opened a settlement or trading post in New Amsterdam, now New York City, in 1624.

The Swedes, encouraged by their brilliant King Augustus Adolphus, founded in 1638 a settlement near Wilmington, Delaware and purchased from the native Indians in 1640 vast tracts of land from the present Cape May northward toward New Salem, New Jersey.

In 1658, Governor Peter Stuyvesant of New Amsterdam sent an expedition southward and forced the surrender of the Swedes to the Dutch.

The English throne looked with more than intense disfavor upon this intrusion of a foreign power between the English settlements in Massachusetts and Virginia.

The result of the ensuing conflict resulted in the founding of the English Colonies in New York and New Jersey, since in 1664 a fleet of four English frigates sailed into New York Bay ready for action against the Dutch.

Old Peter Stuyvesant, the Dutch Governor, pounded his wooden leg against the floor, thrust two pistols in his belt and with pleading, then anger, demanded a stalwart defense. His fellow Dutch council shuddered at the prospect of bloodshed and left the meeting dodging through narrow lanes and alleys, starting at every dog bark and mistaking lamp posts for British grenadiers. Stuyvesant shouted until veins bulged on his forehead. The Dutch citizens nailed up their doors and awaited their inevitable conquest by English, surrendering without a blow or a tear.

A General Nicols, a leader of the English forces in this conquest took charge of the territory in New Jersey from 1664 until the coming of Governor Philip Carteret in the late summer of 1665.

In 1660, Charles II ascended the English throne as poor as a royal church mouse could be. He gradually paid off his creditors as best he could and was also, particularly generous to his brother, James, the Duke of York. He gave his brother the land in America bounded by the Atlantic Ocean on the east and the Delaware River on the west and south. This land was called New Jersey.

New Jersey was divided into two sections - East Jersey and West Jersey. East Jersey was that part east of a line drawn from down near Little Egg Harbor on the east coast in a northwesterly direction up to the Delaware Water Gap.

The Duke of York gave East Jersey to his friend, Lord George Carteret and the western section to Baron John Berkeley.

Prior to the coming of Carteret to East Jersey transactions had already taken place involving land purchase.

An indenture or agreement was made in 1664 between certain Indian Chiefs of Staten Island of one part and John Bailey, Daniel Denton and Luke Watson of Jamaica, Long Island on the other part for the purchase of a "parcel of land bounded on the south by a river commonly called the Raritan, on the east by the Kil Van Kull, to run north up the Kill to the first river, the Passaic, and run west into the country twice the length as it is broad".

The price paid the Indians was twenty fathoms of trading cloth, (a fathom equals six feet in length), two tailored coats, two guns, two kettles, two bars of lead, twenty handfuls of powder, and one year following the entry of Bailey, Denton and Watson into the area an additional four hundred fathoms of white wampum (cylindrical beads made from shells, pierced and strung, used as money and for ornaments, by North American Indians).

Shortly after 1664, Denton and his associates "made over" their

purchase to Governor Carteret and John Ogden.

Sir George Carteret to whom the Duke of York had given East Jersey had made a relative, Philip Carteret, the Governor.

Governor Carteret did not arrive at his government of East Jersey until the end of the summer of 1665 at which time, as stated previously the province was under the jurisdiction of General Nicols.

On Carteret's arrival he summoned a council, granted land and administered the government on the plan of General Concessions, and took up his residence at Elizabethtown.

With Carteret came about thirty people, some of them servants. They brought supplies of various kinds including goods proper for the planting of a new country. On December 11, 1666 Governor Carteret sold the tract on which Woodbridge was settled to Daniel Pierce and a group of associates from New England.

Governor Philip Carteret wanted settlers to come to Woodbridge. He journeyed to Long Island and sent representatives to Connecticut and Massachusetts endeavoring to get settlers from those areas to come to East Jersey. He much preferred to have families who already had experience in the hardship of settling a new, raw area, over inexperienced folks from across the seas. He was successful in his endeavors and pioneer families from New England, especially from Massachusetts came down.

The agreement entered into by Carteret in December of 1666 was confirmed by a deed dated December 3, 1667 and on the same day Daniel Pierce was commissioned as a deputy surveyor to run the boundary lines and lay out the lands to the different associates.

On June 1, 1669 a charter was granted and "thankfully accepted", which erected the tract, called Woodbridge, said to contain six miles square, into a Township to comprise not less than sixty families and by a resolution adopted in that day, "this number was not to be exceeded unless by special order of this town."

It has been recorded that the Charter given Woodbridge "was one of the most liberal ever given in America", see Chapter XIII.

Some of the landmarks by which the boundaries were designated are, of course, unknown but a general idea of Woodbridge may be obtained from the following:

The line began at the mouth of the Rahway River (called Rawack) and followed the stream as high as the tide flowed to a fresh-water brook running west, north-west, "where there stands a beech tree that is marked on the four sides of it." From this tree the line ran straight west through one large swamp and two small ones until it reached a walnut stake in an open field. This stake was marked with two notches and a cross. The distance from the beech tree to the stake was five and one-half miles. The line turned sharply to the

south from this point, running through what was known as "Dismal Swamp" and striking the Raritan River at a distance of seven and one half miles from the walnut stake aforementioned. The line now comes within ten chains west of two red cliffs on the opposite side of the river. (a chain length is about seventy feet).

The Charter then gives the general bounds, with allowance for waste places and highways. The Township was to contain six miles square which amounts to 23, 040 acres, English measure.

The proprietors reserved to themselves half of the gold and silver found in any New Jersey mines.

Freedom of religion was guaranteed by the Charter and land was set aside for the maintenance of a free school. In addition, land for building a church thereon; for use as a church yard; for the erection of a school house; for a market place; and other public places were donated to the Township and forever exempted from taxes. The creation of a township court was authorized. Sections in the articles in regard to free trade, war, election of deputies, liberty to sell and move from the place were all substantially adopted in this generous Charter.

Of the first group of New Englanders coming to their new home, the majority came from the vicinity of Newbury, Massachusetts. They named their new home Woodbridge in honor of Reverend John Woodbridge, the assistant pastor of their Congregational Church.

"²An acknowledged author of early New Jersey history relates that Reverend John Woodbridge came to the then unnamed Woodbridge area accompanied by five men from Massachusetts in the year 1661, three years earlier than any other related incident pertaining to our Township."

"²The men who accompanied Reverend Woodbridge were John Martin, Hopewell Hall, John Pike, John and Charles Gilman. They built five log cabins and a many sided log house to be used as a church meeting place. These houses were constructed in an area which several years later was known as the "Kirk Green". When the building activities were completed, the group returned to Massachusetts."

"In 1663 they returned to this area bringing their wives and children. They sailed by boat to Elizabethtown and then set out on foot carrying bedding, furniture and household equipment. It was a difficult journey over very rough overgrown terrain. Darkness overcame them before their arrival and when they reached the log house, weary and worn they retired forfeiting an evening meal."



The Reverend John Woodbridge

CHAPTER II

PUBLISHING OF FIRST LAWS

Governor Philip Carteret called together in 1668 a council and assembly for the purpose of publishing laws for the government of the province. John Bishop and Robert Dennis, both of the earliest Woodbridge settler group were members of the assembly. Some of the first laws as published were in substance:

That persons resisting authority should be punished at the discretion of the Court.

That men from sixteen to sixty years of age, should provide themselves with arms on penalty of one shilling for the first weeks neglect, and two shillings for each week after.

That for burglary or highway robbery, the first offense, burning in the hand, the second offense burning in the forehead, in both to make restitution, and for the third offense death.

For stealing, the first offense, treble restitution, and the same for the second and third offense; with such increase of punishment as the court saw cause, even to death, if the thief appeared to be incorrigible; but if not, and unable to make restitution they were to be sold for satisfaction or to receive corporal punishment.

That undutiful children smiting or cursing their parents except provoked thereunto for self preservation, upon complaint of, and proof from their parents or either one of them should be punished with death.

That for night walking and reveling after the hour of nine, the parties to be secured by the constable or other officers till morning and then not giving a satisfactory account to the magistrate, to be bound over to the next court, and then receive such punishment as should be inflicted.

That no son, daughter, maid or servant should marry without the consent of his or their parents, master or overseer without being three times published in some public meeting or kirk near the parties abode or notice being set up in writing at some public house near where they lived for fourteen days before, then to be solemnized by some approved minister, justice or chief officer; who, on penalty of twenty pounds, and to be put out of office were to marry one who had not followed those directions.

CHAPTER III

GRANTING OF LAND TO EARLY SETTLERS

Grants of land were made to the settlers - a grant of 100 acres was called a farm, a larger grant was known as a plantation.

³We repeat the list of Freeholders of Woodbridge supposed to comprise actual settlers to whom patents were granted in 1670, or thereabouts, with the amount of land each man recieved. No doubt the land was laid out in plots and selection was made by the drawing of lots as was suggested in the Charter. Occupancy of a grant for seven years entitled the occupant to ownership.

	Acres		Acres
John Adams	97	John Smith, Millwright *	512
Ephraim Andrews	98	John Smith	176
Thomas Auger	167	Abraham Tappen	95½
Obadiah Ayres	171	Israel Thorne	96
Samuel Baker	170	John Watkins	92
Joshua Bradley	171	John Whitaker	91
John Bishop*	470	John Allen, Minister	97
John Bishop Jr.	77	Wm. Brugley	186
M. Bunn	165	Hugh Dun	92
Thomas Bloomfield	326	John French	15
Thos. Bloomfield Jr.	92	Daniel Grasse	164
John Bloomfield	90	Jonathan Haynes	97
John Conger	170	Henry Jaques *	368
John Cromwell	173	Henry Jaques Jr. }	
Wm. Compton	174	Henry Lessenby	88
Robert Dennis*	448	George Little	100
John Dennis	107	David Makany	168
Samuel Dennis	94	Matthew Moore	177
John Dilly	94	Elisha Parker	182
Jonathan Dunham	213	Daniel Pierce*	456
Rehobeth Garnett	448	Joshua Pierce*	30
Samuel Hale	167	Robert Rogers	91
Elisha Ilsey	172	Samuel Smith	103
Stephen Kent*	249	Isaac Tappen	172
Stephen Kent Jr.	104	John Taylor	92
Hugh Marsh*	320	Robert Vanquelin	175
Samuel Moore	356	Nathan Webster	93
Benj. Parker	105	Richard Worth	172
John Pike*	308	Capt. Philip Carteret	313
John Pike Jr.	91	John Ilsey	97
Daniel Robins	173	John Martin, Sr.	255

	Acres		Acres
John Trewman	97	For the Ministry	200
Lords Proprietors	1,000	Maintenance of Schools	100

* This asterisk denotes the nine original associates who were granted 240 acres of upland and 40 of meadow, in addition to the regular allotment.

Of the nine original associates families, five of the nine have burial plots in the White Church Cemetery that are still recognizable. They are as follows:

Kent - ⁴The Kents are descendants of Stephen Kent of Newbury, Massachusetts, who came from Southampton, England in the ship "Confidence" in 1638 with his wife, Margery and four or five servants. The interments in the Kent plot date back to 1761.

Marsh - ⁴Hugh Marsh, carpenter, came from Newbury, Massachusetts. Both Hugh and his son Geroge are mentioned in the town records as early as 1667. The name of Mary Marsh, a daughter of Hugh, is recorded in the marriage registry of March 27, 1691 when she became the wife of Isaac Tappen.

There are sixteen interments in the Marsh plot.

Pike - ⁴Captain John Pike of Newbury came to Woodbridge in 1665 and was one of its most prominent men. He was appointed a judge and was on Governor Carteret's staff for many years. He died in January 1688 or 1689. No monument marks his grave but the grave of his son, Judge John Pike who died in August 1714 is marked and well preserved as are those of six other members of the family interred in the Pike plot.

Major John Pike of Revolutionary War fame and General Zebulon Montgomery Pike, famed explorer and army officer were of this family. Pike's Peak in Colorado is named after General Zebulon Montgomery Pike since he discovered and mapped it in 1806. He was killed in 1813 while fighting against the British in the "War of 1812."

An interesting anecdote is on record regarding Captain John Pike. "He (Captain John Pike), filled several offices and was an active citizen in Newbury. On one occasion, in May 1638, it is recorded that "John Pike shall pay two shillings and six pence for departing from this (town) meeting without leave contemptuously."

These early settlers were a stern, disciplined, rules-abiding folks.

Jaques - ⁴The birth of several children to Henry Jaques was recorded between 1674 and 1679. Henry was probably the son of Henry Jaques, Sr. of Newbury who came there in 1640.

In passing, and for future records, it is of interest to note that a part of the tract on which the new Woodbridge Shopping Center between old Metuchen Avenue and Route 9 is built was for many years identified as the Jaques Farm, later as the Jaques Clay Bank and through the years up to about 1960 was the production source of millions of tons of sand and first quality fire clays.

There are twenty six interments in the Jaques plot in the White Church cemetery going back to 1722, and there are also additional members of this family interred in the Trinity Episcopal Churchyard.

Smith - ⁴It is difficult to determine whether the Smiths whose name are found in the records are all of the same family.

One of the earliest settlers was John Smith, Millwright. He was quite a prominent and active citizen. He acted as Moderator of the first town meetings which were held in his home and he was afterward Deputy of the Assembly and an Associate Judge. He was one of the original Associates and is named in the Agreement as "John Smith of Barnstable."

In 1643, John Married Susann Hinckley, whose brother Thomas later became Governor of New Jersey. Their children were Samuel born April 1644 and twelve others, born between 1644 and 1668, viz. Sarah, Ebenezer, Mary, Doreas, John, Shuball, John, Benjamin, Ichabod, Elizabeth, Thomas and Joseph. Samuel, Thomas and Ichabod Smith all had children whose births are recorded in the old Woodbridge records.

In 1677, after residing in Woodbridge for approximately twelve years, John returned to New England having exchanged his house and land here for a house and lot in Barnstable belonging to Nathaniel Fitz Randolph. Thus, a noted first settler left Woodbridge and another arrived which was to play an important role in the early town history.

CHAPTER IV FOOD, WOLVES, COURTS, BIRTH OF FIRST CHILD, AND OTHER MISCELLANY

³Food, of course, was an immediate necessity to the settlers. Some provisions had been brought along by the early settlers. Some was purchased from the Indians by the early settlers. The local Indians were a friendly cooperative tribe. One reason for this attitude on the part of the Indians can be accounted for that not one acre of their domain was wrested from them by fraud or violence. Every foot was paid for. The land was purchased directly from the Indians at prices that were satisfactory to both parties - a fact that no other State can boast, not even that of William Penn.

Game of all kinds, deer, geese, ducks and wild pigeons were abundant as were fish and oysters in the nearby salt water.

After the first harvest there was corn, wheat, beans, peas, squash, melons and of course beef, pork and lamb in ever increasing amounts.

³Wolves were a matter of concern to the settlers back in those early days. A bonus of as much as twenty shillings was given for each and every wolf killed by a settler. This bonus attracted so many hunters and the kill became so great that the bonus per wolf was reduced to a lesser amount.

Courts were established very soon after arrival by the settlers. Guilty offenders were punished by being confined to public gaze in the "stocks." If the crime was considered of sufficient grievance the whipping post with its lashing was used. For mild crimes the punishment could be a "ducking" in a nearby pond.

³"About the middle of November 1667, a sensation was created in the settlement by the arrival of a baby, the first white child born in the place. She was Mary Compton, daughter of William and Mary Compton. Mary married Caleb Campbell on January 1, 1696. On death, her body was interred in the White Church Cemetery. The monument marking her grave is still (1976) in an excellent state of preservation."

³Fifty years after the birth of this child, the town officially recognized the event in May, 1717, after the baby had grown to womanhood and was married by the following order, "it was voted and allowed that Caleb Campbell, (Mary's husband), shall draw a lot with use in consideration of his wife, the first child as yet born in the town."

There is little, for us, in the records of the earliest times, that gives an intimate story of the settling of the Township, particularly in regard to home building.

³We do know that when Carteret came to Elizabethtown in 1665 there were but four log huts in that place.

³Perhaps the earliest Woodbridge settlers bought or rented tepees from the native Indians who were of a friendly disposition.

These tent like structures would suffice as a temporary shelter until log cabins or huts could be erected and made livable. The first saw mill in the Township was not built until 1682, so that logs, as such, would have been the only construction material available for earliest home construction.

There was no lack of craftsmen among the earliest settlers. The old records definitely mention; mechanics, carpenters, shoemakers, blacksmiths, masons, tanners and weavers.

How soon after the first settlers came, the arrival of horses and other animals is not recorded. Cows, sheep, goats and poultry of various kinds must have come very early since they were food essentials.

It would have been almost impossible to conduct logging without the aid of the horse. Blacksmiths are mentioned as being among the earliest of the settlers. Where the "Smithy" holds forth, there must also have been horses.

Logging was aided in those days because of the fact that there was practically no underbrush in the surrounding forests.

³Old records state that the Indians regularly burned off the underbrush. We do not definitely know the reason for this action. We do know today that after a forest fire, the blueberry crop the following years is unusually plentiful.

³Road building was commenced early in the settlement. The first road ran past the "Kirk Green", the present location of the White Church, in an easterly direction. After passing the "Kirk Green", the road turned north. In other words, it ran, at that point, behind the present location of the White Church.

³The road ran north to what is now Trinity Lane, turned west and in a short distance made another ninety degree turn to the north and proceeded along the present route of Rahway Avenue.

Retracing our steps, along this road; after the ninety degree turn just east of the White Church, this road also continued to the uplands beyond to the west bank of the then wide salt water creek which still bisects the low salt meadow area.

³Another first road was roughly the route of present day Amboy Avenue or Route #35. What is now West Avenue, in Sewaren was one of the earliest roads.

³About the time of the road building, lots or home sites were assigned to settlers along the roads. The assignment was usually by drawing and the lots were one or more acres in extent.

³In September of 1680 the Town Governing Committee ordered a

causeway to be built over the salt water creek, and the meadow land near Dunhams Grist Mill to the uplands to the east. (Creek called Papiack)

³This causeway or bridge lasted until January, 1694, when it was worn out or swept away by high tides. A new one was built immediately; wide enough to accommodate a horse drawn cart.

³Numerous docks were built along the course of Papiack Creek for the convenience of loading and unloading sailing vessels which, in those early times, were able to navigate inland as far as the present Woodbridge - Port Reading road. One of the docks still exists today. It is still known as Cutters Dock and is located at the west bank of the Papiack creek and Cutters Dock Road. Cutters Dock Road starts at Spa Spring area of Amboy Avenue and runs eastward, terminating at the creek.

³There was a road built which led in the direction of Elizabeth. This road terminated in what today is the Leesville section of our town near the Rahway River. If one wished to cross the river, he had to wait for low tide at a shallow area and wade across. If one arrived at high time one waited for the next low tide. In 1686 a bridge was built over the Rahway River near the Leesville area and travel to Elizabethtown was greatly facilitated.

Of necessity, wells had to be dug to make fresh water available. There were, at first, neighborhood wells which served satisfactorily.

The author, in 1930, purchased an old home site in the Edgar Hill section of the town. In the back yard an old well remained but was covered with a large, thick slab of slate and a mound of assorted size stones.

On October 22, 1669 the Town Fathers decreed that "The first Tuesday in each month be set aside for the Town Meeting Day, the session to begin at ten o'clock in the morning and to close at four o'clock in the afternoon; extra meetings to be called when necessary; late comers to be fined one pence, and absentees two shillings."

³The first sidewalk, material used unknown, but probably planking, was laid along the road to Rahway in October 1689.

³At the Town Meeting on September 17, 1680 the matter of taxes brought about the following: "appointment of two "rate gatherers," Samuel Moore "engaged to find house room to receive it, i.e, the rate; for be it known that the taxes were not in the shape of jingling coins or rustling bank notes, but in quarters of beef, bushels of grain, or barrels of pork. Mr. Moore's house must have presented a spectacle, at which Mrs. Moore stood aghast. Load after load of sirloin, veal, sausage, liver, wheat, corn, etc. strewn upon the floor.

³As early as 1669 it was voted that the section then and still known as Strawberry Hill was patented as a "Perpetual Sheep Common; for the inhabitants of the west side of Papiak Creek. In the Spring of 1690 the geese began to be troublesome in this classic spot which had earlier been set apart for sheep alone. The geese cropped the tender grass shoots so close to the ground that there was nothing left for the sheep. By the fall fo 1690 sentiment began to crystalize against the presence of the geese on the hill and in March of 1691 law was passed barring geese from the hill under penalty of being killed forthwith.

⁷An interesting comment on health conditions hereabout was noted in a letter written in 1664 by Charles Gordon of Woodbridge to his brother Doctor John Gordon of Scotland. Doctor John is warned away from New Jersey because it was too healthy a place ot support a physican properly. This unfortunately was not always true. In 1709, smallpox caused deaths in the town, Samuel Hale, one of the original Freeholders, was one of the victims. This dreaded disease struck again in January of 1732 and in the winter and spring of 1774 - 1775.

CHAPTER V

RELIGION IN EARLY WOODBRIDGE

³The settlers were God-fearing and worshipful people and church services were arranged for immediately.

As early as 1669, the same year in which a charter was granted, a movement was made to secure a minister of the gospel. Services had been conducted in homes, but it was believed that a preacher should be settled in the community.

The first effort to secure a preacher was unsuccessful. On June 8, 1669 a committee was appointed to go to Newark to call upon the Reverend Abraham Pierson to request of him to come to Woodbridge and serve as minister. The Reverend Pierson declined the invitation due to the advanced age of his father who was pastor of the Newark congregation.

The Reverend Abraham Pierson later in his career became the president of Yale College (as it was then called) in New Haven, Connecticut. In 1714 his son the Reverend John Pierson succeeded to the pastorate of the Woodbridge Church.

Of special interest regarding the Reverend Pierson is the fact that he married Ruth Woodbridge, a grand-daughter of John Woodbridge after whom the township is named. Ruth Woodbridge Pierson died in 1732 and was interred in the White Church cemetery. Her monument as of 1976 is still well preserved.

The Reverend Pierson was instrumental in founding the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University). He left Woodbridge in 1752 after thirty eight years of ministry there to preach in Mendham, New Jersey.

He died in 1770 at the age of eighty one, having preached the gospel for fifty six years.

After another unsuccessful attempt to secure the Reverend Peck of Elizabethtown. The Reverend Samuel Treat agreed to come and preach six months. Apparently the Reverend Treat went to another field after his short pastorate, for we find in the town records of June 2, 1672 a resolution that "there should be a settled ministry."

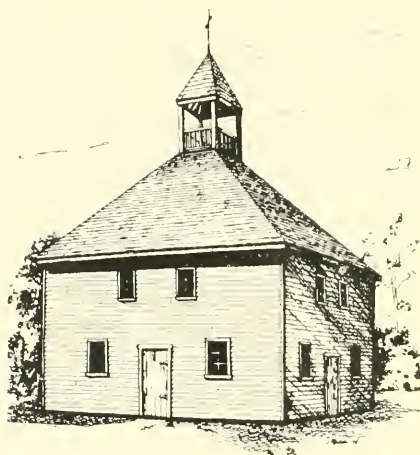
³The Reverend Benjamin Salsbury was called to preach on a trial for a space of three months. Before he had completed one month of his services, the Town Fathers very tactfully informed him that "when his quarter is out he is free from any engagement from this town, that he may be at liberty to dispose of himself as he shall see good."

The old settlers were living in faith however, for we find them resolved to build a meeting house in 1674.

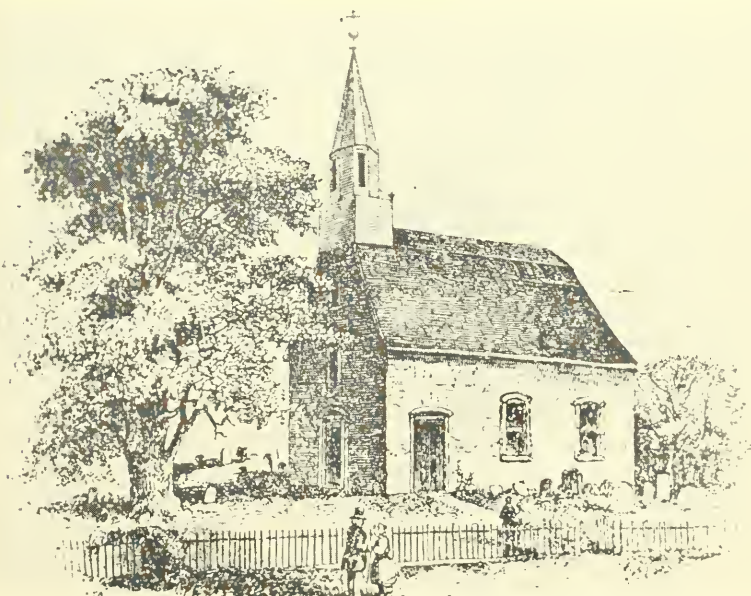
On May 27, 1675 the foundation for the first church was laid. The first building was a small one, only about thirty feet square. It was plain in its architecture and furnishings. There were three doors. The Pulpit was a small box-like affair high up in the eastern wall of the church. It was reached by a narrow, steep stairways. Pews ran around the walls of the church and criss-crossed in a most confusing way. Pews were rented by the year. A small bell hung over the center of the church and to ring it the sexton had to stand in the center

of the church. There was no stove and the pews were not cushioned. Worshippers were allowed to bring foot warmers into the church but we find a record in which members were instructed not to leave foot warmers in the church after services were concluded.

The first edifice stood for 128 years or until the year 1803 when it was torn down to make way for the present structure, a much larger building. This building of 1803 was completely restored, renovated and beautified during the early 1970's.



First Church 1675



Trinity Church, the second church building 1756.



Trinity Church Rectory, built in 1670.

Trinity Episcopal Church, originally a mission of the Church of England, held its first service in 1698, was founded as a parish in 1702 and received a Royal Charter from King George III in 1769. In 1713 its first church building was erected upon a portion of the 200 acres set aside in the Town Charter for the use of the established church. It was replaced by a larger edifice in 1756 which was destroyed by fire in 1858.

It seems that while two ladies of the Altar Guild were preparing the altar for service they failed to watch the fire they had built in the iron stove. Suddenly the stove overheated and the roof caught afire. Before the ice could be broken on the surface of the nearby creek and water carried by the firemen in leather buckets the building was destroyed. The sum of \$25.14 was realized by the sale of old iron, handmade nails and odd bricks and became the nucleus for the building fund for a new church. The present church building designed by the well known architect, Richard Upjohn, was built in 1860 at a cost of \$3,000.00.

Trinity Church has remained active ever since and has grown with the community. A new Parish House was built in 1967 and in 1970 a Cloister was erected connecting the Parish House to the Church.

The dwelling which now serves as the Trinity Church Rectory was built in 1670 by Jonathan Dunham, the Colonial grist mill proprietor, of bricks said to have been brought over from Holland and laid in Flemish Bond like those in the buildings of Colonial Williamsburg. Close by the front entrance of the Rectory one of the ancient mill grinding stones used in the Dunham grist mill remains to this day. Items of historical interest still in possession of the parish include the original Charter of 1769, a silver chalice of 1760, a folio Bible of 1751 and a First Edition of the American Book of Common Prayer of 1795.

³It will probably surprise most readers to learn that Quakers were well established in Woodbridge prior to 1686. On February 16, 1713 they built a meeting house on the present site of the Methodist Church on Main Street opposite the present Post Office.

This building or meeting house was thirty feet long, twenty feet broad and was twelve feet high from floor to ceiling. By 1722 the meeting room had a gallery as well as comfortable rooms upstairs.

In 1784 the Quakers determined to sell the meeting house. An unknown person offered to buy it, but negotiations were broken off. Eventually the property was bought by the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The Methodists built their first church building in 1832. In 1954 there was disastrous fire in the building and complete renovation, restoration as well as additions were made in 1956.

Many of the early settlers were members of the Congregational Church who had joined with the Presbyterians in church activities. In 1874 the Congregationalists withdrew from the Presbyterian Church and established their own church located at the intersection of Grove and Barron Avenue.

The story goes that one of two brothers, members of the Presbyterian Church was asked "Are you going to leave the Presbyterian Church and join the Congregationalists?" "I don't know yet" was his reply, "I'm waiting for my brother to make a decision." "You mean he will make the decision for both of you?" "Oh no", he replied, "I'll be a member of the church that he decides not to be affiliated with". In such a manner are decisions made.

⁶According to tradition the seeds of Catholicism were locally sown in the very earliest days of the existence of the town. In 1665 when Governor Carteret came to New Jersey, he brought with him a Catholic, Robert Vanquilion, as his Provincial Surveyor.

Vanquilion became a resident of our town and he is frequently

referred to by Dally in his historical book "Woodbridge and Vicinity".

In June of 1683, Rev. Nicholas Gulick, a Jesuit, came from Maryland to Woodbridge to baptize a Robert du Poitiers. This was the first Catholic baptism in our town. Father Gulick also celebrated the first Mass at the same time in the Vanquillion home.

The first Catholic church erected in our village was of frame construction and was completed in 1865. It was located on the south side of Main Street opposite the entrance to Metuchen Avenue.

Up to this time Mass had been celebrated in the homes of the parishioners by visiting priests. When no visiting priest was in town, Catholics who wished to attend Mass, walked or rode horseback or used some conveyance to Rahway or Perth Amboy.

The first frame church, as years passed proved to be too small and a larger frame structure was erected on the opposite (north) side of Main Street, a few hundred feet nearer the center of town. The larger church was dedicated and consecrated in 1888. This large frame structure was moved from its original site on Main Street to the intersection of Amboy Avenue and Grove Street in 1924. This frame structure was demolished in 1968 and a new beautifully designed structure expressing some of the traditional features of Romanesque architecture was erected. Ground for this new church was broken on August 20, 1966 and Dedication was held on June 23, 1968.

The Jewish religion in Woodbridge was officially dated with the signing of a certificate of incorporation in 1913. Prior to 1913, in 1907, the Jews in Woodbridge proper joined with fellow worshippers of Avenel and "High Holy Days" services were held in Kendle's Hall which stood on the present location of the Cloverleaf overpass of Route One and Route Thirty-five. In 1912 services were held in the Masonic Hall which was located on Green Street near the Pennsylvania Railroad right of way. In 1915 services were held in a hall above Morris Choper's Department Store on Main Street.

The first synagogue was built in 1923 on School Street, directly across from the Woodbridge Fire Department Station. The present Jewish Synagogue and Center on Amboy Avenue had its cornerstone placing on June 20, 1948.

The property for the First Baptist Church of Woodbridge was purchased from members of the Cutter family in 1906.

The first church for this organization was built in 1909. The task of carrying the funding was rather arduous for the few members. However, as more Negroes moved into our Township, conditions financially improved.

Some years after 1909 the congregation purchased the lots adjoining the church on Nielson Street.

In 1957 the first church building was razed and the larger, present structure was built.

Since 1962 the membership has steadily grown. Presently the membership includes not only Woodbridge residents but also those from Perth Amboy, Rahway, Iselin and Plainfield. A very fine group of young adults is actively engaged in the church work.

CHAPTER VI

EARLY SCHOOLS & SCHOOL LANDS

³Provision for the education of children was made by the township in the early days of the settlement. A school was regarded by the villagers as indispensable, and was named in the Charter, of 1669 as an object for the appropriation of public land. The general location of this land was agreed upon, but it was not at first surveyed. In consequence some ungenerous persons sought to occupy the chosen ground and obtained patents for it. This aroused the indignation of their fellow citizens. In September, 1682 resolutions were passed in a Town Meeting strongly condemnatory of the men holding the free school tract, declaring their patents to be illegal. It was determined to complain to the authorities that the grievance might be redressed. In case this should prove to be ineffective, the law was to be invoked to secure the ejectment of the intruders. A committee was appointed to enforce the sentiments and determination of the town. The committee did as they were instructed. The land was recovered for school purposes alone. It consisted of one hundred acres, twelve of which, by a town order of October 10, 1682 were to be marsh and the remaining eighty-eight to be upland.

The first school teacher was James Fullerton, who was elected to that dignity on March 3, 1689. He may have taught school until 1691. According to records which appear somewhat nebulous, nothing is mentioned about schools until February 1694.

On February 27, 1694, John Brown of Amboy was hired at a salary of twenty-four pounds (\$70.00) for the next year. At the Town Meeting when this decision was made, one John Conger protested against this and demanded that this protest be recorded, which it was. Doubtless he thought twenty-four pounds too lavish an expenditure for teaching one year. His views of a liberal educational policy were well illustrated in the signature he attached to an important township paper a year after subscribing his name with the cabalistic X - "his mark."

Previous to Mr. Brown's advent, a Mr. John Beacher was offered to teach six months on trial for thirteen pounds with the proviso "that he shall be constant and faithful in that employ as a school master ought to be and that he shall be engaged to attend the school this winter time until nine o'clock at night."

On the 12th of June 1695 a tax was ordered to be levied forthwith to make up the school master's salary, which was largely in arrears. John Brown, who was teaching the village school at this time could not have been much fascinated in view of this state of things.

³In December 1701, a piece of land "about ten rods" was allowed for a school house, "provided it did not prejudice the highway." This is presumed to have been the renowned edifice on the Strawberry Hill area. Of course, the building was entirely without plumbing. Heating is questionable. There might have been a fireplace or a pot bellied stove for the burning of wood. But, nowhere can we find a confirmation of these two items. Drinking water was carried from the well of a nearby home. Believe it or not, 150 years later in 1851 the town authorities ordered a spring dug and cleared near the school for supplying the water for the children. The pail of water and common tin drinking cup remained in use. The one room school serviced all grades from the first through the eighth.

The first multi-grade school was built in 1876-77 on School Street at a cost of \$18,000, and was known as School number 1. This is in comparatively modern times so let us return again to earlier years.

Thereafter, that is from 1701 nothing appears on the records respecting schools until March 1735, when measures were taken to make the school lands more productive by the appointment of a special committee to lease and manage them, and such continued to be the mode of administration for a great many years. The land was cultivated and a great amount of corn and other vegetable products were sold.

The first statement made of the amount of funds which had accumulated for the use of schools, appears in March 1761, when the sum of £321-11s-11 1/2d is reported to be in the hands of the Committee and from the rapid increase it is probable more attention was bestowed upon amassing the means, than furthering the blessings of education. In March, 1764, three years later the fund was £ 434,7s, 9d.

At this time a vote was taken ³"whether or not it was best to take part of the money that was arisen from ye use and profits of the School lands, and make use of it for ye Schooling of Poor People's children and the vote passed in the negative."

By November, 1775, this fund had reached an imposing total of £ 1062, 12s, 6d. or a total of about \$3,000, which represented an impressive purchasing power in those years.

What was the character of the schools then established in the town is not accurately known, but it would have been assuredly better to have expended some of the fund upon the education of the "so called poor people's children," than to have kept it to be dissipated or squandered during the troubles of the Revolution; which was the case, for in March, 1783, the fund was reduced to £480, 10s, 5d - a less amount than that in hand in 1766, when the abovementioned vote "passed in the negative."

The inhabitants, however, appear to have learned something from experience, and after 1789 the interest of the school fund in connection with the amount of tax assessed upon dogs, was appropriated for the schooling of poor children.

The so called "School Lands" referred to frequently are now the location of Eastern Airlines buildings along the south side of the Garden State Parkway in the Iselin section of our Township.

CHAPTER VII

BRIEF TALES REGARDING SOME OF THE EARLIEST SETTLERS

³James Smith, "Wheelright" so designated to distinguish him from John Smith, "Scotchman", another of the settlers, was honored, immediately after the organization of the town with the post of Constable; the office of Constable was not a very desirable one and a change appears to have been made every year, so that scarcely a prominent settler escaped the honor in the course of time. James Smith was later promoted to be a Deputy of the Assembly; an Assistant Judge. The Town Meetings were at first held at his home, he acting as Moderator and, from various other offices conferred upon him, he appears to have been an esteemed citizen.

³Samuel Moore, who for twenty years, from 1668 to 1688 held the office of Town Clerk.

³George Lockhart, "practitioner of physio" an archaic way of saying, "the medical art or profession" is mentioned in 1679 as residing in Woodbridge, and in 1683, then being in England. The proprietors mention him as possessing, according to his own statement, "a considerable plantation in the province" and "desirous to have the Marshal's place; he offering in case they would grant him the Commission and a lot of ten acres in "Perth Town" to build them a prison and town house." There is no record that any of this was done.

³James Parker, the first native Jersey born printer was born in 1714. In 1725 at age eleven he was apprenticed to William Bradford, the first printer in New York. For some unknown cause, Parker ran away from his employer in May 1733, and was advertised in the "New York Gazette" of the 21st of that month, but we find him again in New York, in good standing, and at the head of an establishment himself in less than nine years thereafter; fostering no ill will toward Bradford, to whom, at his death in 1752, he gave an excellent character in an editorial article published in his paper.

Incidentally, Bradford's headstone, over his grave, may be seen in Trinity Churchyard, New York City. He was ninety-two years of age when death overtook him.

In 1751 James Parker established the first press in New Jersey, here in Woodbridge and from time to time printed the proceedings of the Legislature and other official documents.

In 1752 the "Independent Reflector" edited by William Livingston — afterward Governor of New Jersey — and others were printed by Parker and Weyman, but the fear of the men in authority, whose ire

might be excited by its independent Character, led Parker to decline the responsibility of its continued publication. Although he remained connected with the presses in New York he resided principally at Woodbridge, where, in 1758 he printed the new American Magazine.

In 1755 a partnership with a John Holt, led to the establishment of a press at New Haven, from which the "Connecticut Gazette" the first newspaper in that province was issued.

In 1761 he printed the second volume of Nevill's Compilation of the Laws of New Jersey the imprint being "Woodbridge In New Jersey, printed by James Parker, Printer to the King's most Excellent Majesty, for the Province."

In 1764 Parker compiled and printed a "Conductor Generalis" for Justices of the Peace, he then holding that office in Middlesex County and the following year moved his press from Woodbridge to Burlington for the accommodation of the History of New Jersey by Smith, but on the completion of the work the press was returned to Woodbridge.

His career was certainly one of great and extensive usefulness. He was a very close friend of Benjamin Franklin and conducted a frequent correspondence with him. How their friendship materialized is not know, but it blossomed into a warm delightful association.

Among other stations which Parker held to the satisfaction of his neighbors was that of Layreader to the Episcopal Congregation of the Trinity Church on Rahway Avenue, officiating several times on those Sundays when Reverend Thomas Bradbury Chandler of Elizabethtown was prevented from visiting the town due to engagements elsewhere.

In Woodbridge, Parker's printing shop was located on (the site of the previous frame structured St. James Church), Amboy Avenue, now the church parking lot.

James Parker was for some years Postmaster in New York, performing his duties while carrying on his business in that city which of itself, one would think would have been sufficient to engage all his time. Of additional interest, although his duties of Postmaster covered the New England States as well as New York, the department under his management operated at a profit for the Crown.

Parker died in Burlington on July 2, 1770. Great respect was shown toward his remains on their way from Burlington to Woodbridge for burial. The New York Journal of July 2, 1770, states that "his remains were attended for five miles out of Burlington by a considerable number of gentlemen of that place, and at Amboy met by a like number who attended the corpse to Woodbridge,

where a numerous congregation assembled at his home." He was interred in the White Church Cemetery, services being conducted by the Reverend Mr. Preston, Minister of St. Peter's Church of Amboy. The Parker Print Shop was burned down by the British during the Revolutionary War.

There was no headstone to mark the last resting place of the first printer in New Jersey until the year 1969, the Tercentenary year of our Township, when the placing of the marker was part of the 300th anniversary program.

Barron Family:

³⁻⁴Tracable back to year 1066 and William the Conqueror, was at one time a royal family. Came to Massachusetts in 1640 and from there to Woodbridge. Changed their royal name to just plain Barron. Ellis Barron was the first to come to the colony of Massachusetts with his family in 1639. His oldest daughter, Hannah, married a John Coolidge, to which marriage John Calvin Coolidge, President of the United States traces his lineage. Thomas Barron and his nephew, John, in 1876 donated the Barron Memorial Library on Rahway Avenue and Carteret Road to the town.

Bloomfield Family:

³⁻⁴Probably the most illustrious of the early settler families. Thomas, Sr. came from Woodbridge, Suffolk, England. The family can be traced back to 1066 coming from Normandy. Thomas, Sr. held, at one time, practically every office of importance in the Township.

A grandson, John, became a captain in the Third Continental Regiment in 1776.

Another grandson, Dr. Moses Bloomfield, born 1729, died 1791, was for forty years a physician and surgeon in the village and during the Revolutionary War was senior physician and surgeon in the hospitals of the Colonies. He was a representative in the Provincial Congress and General Assembly; as well as an upright magistrate. He was the father of Joseph Bloomfield, the only Woodbridge born citizen to be elected Governor of the State of New Jersey. The town of Bloomfield, New Jersey is named after Governor Joseph.

Dunham Family:

³Another of the outstanding first settler families. As early as 1670, reference is made in the old town books to Jonathan Dunham and his wife, Mary, formerly of Haverhill, Massachusetts. It is recorded that a tract of land was made in his name in consideration of his building the first grist mill in Woodbridge. This he did in 1670-71. His toll or charge was one-sixteenth of the grind. Many compliments were made him because of the lightness and quality of his flour product. In addition to his duties at the mill, he was a

member of a jury sitting in Elizabeth in 1670-71. Later he became foreman of another jury.

During the Revolution his sons although not members, officially, of the armed forces of the colonists, performed outstanding services for General Washington and his cavalry.

Freeman Family:

Henry Freeman came to Woodbridge sometime before 1700. He married in Woodbridge in 1695. He became a prominent figure in the early days being commonly called Judge. He was one of the earliest to have ideas of independence, being sturdy in his assertions of the rights of the Colonists against the encroachment of the Royal Governor, who, nevertheless, recognized his worth by long continuous appointments as one of the six judges of the common pleas of Middlesex County. He died in his 94th year on October 10th, 1763, and was buried in the White Church Cemetery.

The descendants of Henry Freeman and his brother Edward Freeman present a group of citizens ever keen to both the rights and duties of the community.

A descendant, Daniel, was not only President of the Chamber of Commerce but also Mayor of the city of Los Angeles, California. Other sons and grandsons of this family served this community in the highly respected profession of physician.

For a period of one hundred years in the history of Woodbridge there was a Doctor Freeman. There were over the years a total of six Dr. Freemans. The fifth Doctor Freeman died in 1904. The sixth Doctor Freeman removed from Woodbridge to Florida and no data is available regarding him.

Heard Family:

³⁻⁴John Heard, first settler, presumably from Salisbury, Massachusetts to Woodbridge in 1681.

There were numerous sons and grandsons but the most famous and best known was General Nathaniel Heard of Revolutionary War fame. The General was one of the first to take up arms against the British in 1775. He raised a company of troops which he placed at the disposition of Provincial Congress. He was, first, a Colonel of the First Middlesex Regiment, afterward Colonel of a battalion of Minute Men, later a Colonel of a battalion named in his honor, then he was made Brigadier General and finally held that rank in the militia. The General died at age sixty-two on October 28, 1792 and was buried in the White Church Cemetery.

The Heard name will live as long as there is a Woodbridge. The brook that flows eastward to empty into the salt meadows and which so many, many times has flooded School and Pearl Streets and Rahway Avenue is named after this family.

Denis Family:

³This short tale has no special political or public service characteristics but is included to illustrate the foresight and deep family togetherness of our early people.

Robert Dennis, one of the associates which makes him of unusual importance among the early settlers came from Yarmouth, Massachusetts. He must have been of considerable age on arrival at Woodbridge, for we find that as early as December 3, 1673 being "by the providence of God disabled from managing and carrying on his outward occasions" he transferred to his children, Jonathan, Joseph and Elizabeth, all his property, "the real estate to his sons, and to this daughter two cows, five yearlings, with all his movables in the house," on condition that they should allow him and wife, Mary, a comfortable maintenance "for meat and drink, washing, lodging and apparel" during their lives. Probably due to his ill health he ceased to be mentioned in connection with any public affairs after 1675. No date of his death is available.

CHAPTER VIII

CERTAIN INCIDENTAL FACTS CONCERNING THE EARLY TIMES

³Woodbridge is the oldest original township in the State of New Jersey.

The first grist mill in the State was erected in 1670 and operated under an agreement with the town by Jonathan Dunham.

The first sawmill was erected in 1682 by Jonathan Bishop on the Rahway River.

In February, 1703, John Clake or Cleak "for his encouragement in fixing up a fulling mill" recieved a grant of twenty acres on the southerly branch of the Rahway River. In a "fulling" mill cloth and/or yarn was made.

Under date of July, 1712, John Pike and John Bishop, Justices, certify that John Robison, when a child, had one of his ears partly bitten off "by a jade" (a vicious horse), that they had known him from childhood, and that he had never been guilty of any crime to merit such punishment. They gave him the certificate "to prevent any scandal that he may be liable unto by strangers in any place where the Providence of God shall cast him."

³As almost all pasturage was in common in those early periods of history of the province, great necessity existed for the due indentification of cattle by their respective owners, and their marks were consequently duly recorded in the town book - their identification mark calling for the exercise of some ingenuity in devising the requisite variety, the "round up" and the branding iron as yet had not made their appearance, thus we have for Elisha Parker's mark "a cross of the near ear and a slit on the under side of same," for Richard Potter, "three holes in the left ear," for Obadiah Ayres, "two half pennies on the under side of the off or right ear," and for Samuel Moore's, "a half penny on the under side of the right or off ear and a slit across the upper side of the near or left ear."

³The "Sons of Liberty" of Woodbridge and Piscataway took the lead in 1765-66 in several prominent measures of the day, and it was through their interference, mainly, that William Coxe of Philadelphia was led to decline the office of Stamp Distributor for New Jersey under the British Parliament imposed Stamp Act. A deputation of the Sons called on Mr. Coxe, and though instructed to treat him with great deference and respect they presented to him a communication to the effect that, a week's delay in resigning the office would render a visit from them in a body, a necessity which would be productive of results mutually disagreeable.

There is some question as to who was the first proprietor of the accommodation for the early day travelers. One account states that the first tavern in the State was established in Woodbridge in 1683 by Samuel Morse on the northwest corner of Green Street and Rahway Avenue where Jannis' Cafe and the Oldsmobile Agency now stands.

The town was then in the great thoroughfare between New York and Philadelphia and an inn, tavern or ordinary was a most welcome sight to travelers on horseback or riding the stagecoach.

The Old Pike House, an inn, stood on the opposite corner of Green Street and Rahway Avenue where the Amoco Service Station presently pumps gasoline. This famous old inn was demolished shortly after 1920.

A third tavern stood on the corner now occupied by the Knights of Columbus Organization. The proprietor was John Manning. George Washington spent the night of April 28, 1789 at this inn. Washington was on his way to New York city for the inauguration ceremony making him the first President of the United States.

³The first cup of tea drank in New Jersey occurred in Woodbridge.

In 1730, in a building occupied by Dr. Samuel Freeman, some tea brought from New York City was drank by a company of ladies. A Mrs. Campym, a widow, her daughter, afterward a Mrs. Cutter, a Mrs. Van Cortlandt, and others were present. A discussion arose among the ladies as to the vessel in which it should be prepared. A tankard was produced and pronounced serviceable. Should the tea be boiled, brewed, or steeped? Various opinions were advanced, but the steeping party was in ascendancy, so the tea was steeped. When it was ready to be served, it was poured into diminutive cups and the flavor was the subject of many comments. Cake was eaten between sips, and this, perhaps contributed toward the favorable verdict rendered with respect to the tea.

We give you an idea of the cost of dining out in Woodbridge in 1748 from prices posted in a local tavern.

Hot meal with meat	- 20¢
Cold meal with meat	- 14¢
4 oz. rum	- .08¢
4 oz. brandy	- .08¢
Quart	- 40¢
Quart Strong beer	- .06¢
Quart cider	- .08¢

CHAPTER IX

THE JERSEY BLUES

²⁻³As early as 1673 a group of militia men was formed to control the ravages of foreign Indians from New York State and Pennsylvania. These Indians came to our neighborhood during the summer months to feast on the salt water fish and oysters that were so abundant in the Kill Van Kull back in those early days.

These Indians were exceedingly mischievous and delighted in burning haystacks, corn fodder and stealing from the settlers.

This group of militia men later became known as the "Jersey Blues". ²Their royal blue uniforms were faced and lined with scarlet. They wore a red vest and a three-cornered blue-black beaver hat. Their stockings and gaiters were blue. Buttons on the uniforms of the privates were pewter marked with the company's insignia. Officers uniforms were adorned with gilt buttons. The "Jersey Blues" regiment had substations at Woodbridge, Piscataway and Perth Amboy.

General George Washington held the "Jersey Blues" in high esteem.

At winter quarters at Valley Forge the inner line of defense before Washington's own headquarters was manned by "Jersey Blues".

At Yorktown where the surrender of the British ended the war, the "Jersey Blues" were actively engaged. The "Jersey Blues" also were active in the war effort in western New York State and upper Pennsylvania.

²The "Jersey Blues" are believed to have held meetings in two homes in Woodbridge.

The Timothy Bloomfield home, in what is now the Fords section and the Joseph Gilman home in Woodbridge were used for meetings.

During the Civil War in the 1860's a uniform with blue coat and pantaloons was worn by a unit of volunteers recruited in part from Woodbridge; they were called the "Zouves" and they fought with great bravery. They were really the "Jersey Blues".

The last appearance of this group in their frocks and pantaloons was at the Firemen's Convention at Rahway, N.J. in 1905.

From 1673 to 1905 represents a long glowing record for this historic regiment.

CHAPTER X

SKIRMISHES AND BATTLES FOUGHT WITHIN THE ORIGINAL TOWNSHIP BOUNDARIES

"On Wednesday, April 19th, 1775, war fairly began, for the first patriot blood was shed upon the green at Lexington, Massachusetts. The excitement occasioned by this wanton massacre was intense. The feeling was as strong in Woodbridge as elsewhere. Tories or Loyalists were treated as strangers by those who hitherto had lived near them as neighbors. People gathered about the public places to discuss the latest news from Boston. The village tavern was thronged every evening, and the men sat late over their rum or cider, eagerly listening to the nervous recitals of travelers who had stopped for the night.

Committees of Correspondence were organized in many of the towns. The Woodbridge Committee was actively at work during this year (1775). The Tories or Loyalists to the King in this place were strong and influential but the Whigs outnumbered them and succeeded in over-awing them.

³"On the 17th of June, 1775, Colonel Nathaniel Heard of Woodbridge marched to Amboy under orders from Samuel Tucker, President of the Provincial Congress of New Jersey, to arrest William Franklin, the Royal Governor of New Jersey. The colonel and his militia men, a guard of sixty men, surrounded the Governor's mansion and captured the indignant official. The cause of the arrest was the Governor's adherence to the English Crown Government.

Franklin was committed to the custody of Governor Trumbull of Connecticut, by whom he was held prisoner for two years and four months, when he was exchanged and went to New York to assist the Tories or Loyalists."

It has been recorded that Franklin became the head of the British spy organization in New Jersey directing the action from New York City.

William Franklin was the son of the renowned colonial patriot Benjamin Franklin.

³"Woodbridge, during 1776, was the scene of the greatest excitement. Troops were constantly passing and repassing through the town. In the latter part of the year the British had collected about 400 head of cattle and 200 sheep, intending that these would feed their troops during the winter, but a company of impudent, daring Colonial militia men entered the town on the night of December 11th and quietly drove John Bull's beef and mutton into a Colonial camp".

3“The year 1777 was the most exciting one of the war, probably to the inhabitants of Woodbridge. The latter part of the year before had been very disastrous to the cause of liberty. The American army had retreated across the state to Pennsylvania, passing en route through Bonhamtown which at that time was part of Woodbridge. In its wake followed the British and Hessians troops, who flushed with success, ravaged the country, to the great consternation of the residents. The British were checked markedly at Trenton on December 25th, 1776 and again at Princeton, a very short time thereafter, but through the Spring of 1777, the enemy dispoiled the Eastern part of New Jersey.

1The Hessians marched through our village with their huge brass fronted caps, long pig tails hanging down their backs; yellow waistcoats and breeches and blue dress coats - tyrants of the hour.

3“About the 6th of January, 1777, one thousand bushels of salt were taken from the English at Spanktown (Rahway) after a sharp encounter in which the Americans were victorious. The conflict lasted two hours. When the British found themselves being worsted they sent dispatches to Woodbridge for reinforcements. Two regiments, apparently from Amboy hastened to their relief; but the Hessians encamped at Woodbridge refused to go, believing that the Jersey militia were at Spanktown in immense numbers. Spanktown was part of Woodbridge back in those years.

3“The distinguished British General Howe came near being captured in the neighborhood of Bonhamtown, (then part of Woodbridge), in March of 1777. He was at that place on the 8th attempting to open communications with New Brunswick which had been cut off by the Americans; but he failed. In his attempt to return to Amboy 3,000 men were called out as a guard - supposed to be the entire force in the neighborhood of Bonhamtown. Skirmishes occurred between the British and the Colonial, under General Maxwell. A serious engagement followed resulting in loss on both sides.”

3“Again, at Spanktown a severe encounter occurred on the 23rd of February, 1777, between Maxwell's troops, stationed there and the 3rd British Brigade from Amboy. The latter force made a detour by way of Spanktown for the purpose of capturing Maxwell; but their real destination was New Brunswick into which they intended to bring their prisoners in triumph. Maxwell was not accommodating enough to be captured; but the Americans followed their foe through the snow all the way back to Amboy, pouring a destructive fire into the retreating ranks. The British loss by their own account, was large - four officers and nearly one hundred men killed and wounded. The Americans set down the British loss as 500 and their

own as three killed and twelve wounded. Such a great disparity seems almost incredible."

³"Several American soldiers were made prisoners during April at or near Woodbridge. Among them we find Patrick McConnally, a Hunterdon County man."

¹"Isaac Cotheal was wounded and captured near Woodbridge on April 17th, 1777. His wounds must have been severe, because of them he was discharged from the service May 1st, 1778. Cotheal was a guide for the patriot army at the time of his capture. He was living in 1810, but was suffering greatly from his wounds and an increased pension for him was mentioned as desirable.

³"At two o'clock on the morning of April 15th, 1777, a detachment of Colonel Cook's 12th Pennsylvania Regiment, under Capt. Alexander Paterson, made a successful attack on the British picket guard at the Bonhamtown area of Woodbridge. The entire guard of twenty-five soldiers were either killed or captured. The main body of the British forces retired to the intrenchments near at hand."

³"On the 23rd of April, 1777, long after dark, a detachment of sixty-three men under Capt. Lacy marched through Woodbridge from the vicinity of Rahway, on route to Amboy, to surprise the Hessian pickets there. But the pickets had been removed; so that, beyond a little consternation and the killing of one sentinel and the wounding of another, this venture was not a success. On the following night, another American party of about thirty attempted to accomplish the same purpose but the darkness was great and they stumbled right among the Hessians, who captured everyone."

"In May, 1777, the Royal Highlanders (71st Scotch Regiment) had posted themselves half way between New Brunswick and Bonhamtown, (then part of Woodbridge), with six companies of light infantry. On the 10th, they were assailed by a part of Colonel General Steven's division and the battle lasted about an hour and a half. Near Piscataway the Highlanders took possession of a wood, but the Americans drove them out of it. The pickets of the enemy were also driven into Bonhamtown. Although the Royal troops were reinforced, such was the vigor of the onslaught of the Continentals that the British again retreated, fighting as they retired. Another British reinforcement compelled the Americans to give way. In excellent order they fell back with a loss of twenty-seven. The Highlanders suffered severely, but the loss is not stated."

³"The British Army evacuated New Brunswick on the 22nd of June, 1777, retreating to Perth Amboy. On Thursday morning (26th) they marched forth under Sir William Howe and Lord Cornwallis as far as Westfield, intending to annihilate General Washington, whose camp was now situated in the neighborhood of Plainfield. But the resistance they encountered at every stage of their advance

was disheartening in the extreme. Nearly every cross road had its squad of pugnacious militia which poured a deadly volley into the splendid columns of the well equipped enemy. As they were passing through Woodbridge they were checked for half an hour by Colonel Daniel Morgan's Raiders. Some sharp skirmishing and rapid firing resulted in considerable loss of life."

"The British army moved from Amboy in two columns, one marching by way of Metuchen, (then part of Woodbridge), under General Howe, and the other passing through Woodbridge under command of General Cornwallis."

"These columns were to form a junction beyond Metuchen; and then, two miles further on they were to separate in order to flank the Americans at New Market. Four batteries took up their position at Bonhamtown, with six heavy guns, in the morning of this eventful day. The right column under Cornwallis, was the one that met Morgan's Rangers at Woodbridge. Lord Howe's official dispatch stated that Morgan's force comprised 760 men. Of course, the Rangers were compelled to give way, for the odds against them were too heavy."

"When Cornwallis entered the road leading to Scotch Plains, just above Main Street, Metuchen, (then Woodbridge), he was checked by General Sterling's corp of American Troops. A general skirmish ensued. Sterling was well posted in a wood, but he was compelled to retire after a severe contest, in which he lost three brass pieces of ordinance and several men. Lord Howe admits the British loss to be five killed, thirty wounded and a loss of thirteen prisoners. The enemy's troops in this engagement comprised three regiments of Hessian Grenadiers, one of British Grenadiers, one of Light Infantry, the Hessian Chasseiurs and the Queen's Rangers."

"Doubtless one cause of General Sterling's retreat at Metuchen was the knowledge he must have possessed that Lord Howe was advancing in the rear of the right column and would soon overtake it with a powerful reinforcement."

"After an intensely hot day and a fatiguing march the British entered Westfield. Looking toward the hills, (Watchung Mountains), the British saw that Washington had made his camp there. Every movement of the British was in view of the American commander; taking his position on the bold bluff now so well known as "Washington's Rock." he was able to distinguish any important maneuver his foe might choose to make."

³"Another engagement took place in the Spring of 1777 in Raritan Township, now called Edison, but originally part of Woodbridge. Apparently, back in those years the small area was called "Mt. Pleasant". This engagement was known as the "battle of Ash Swamp."

"The British Army was encamped here when immediately after noon the alarm of an attack by the Colonials was sounded. At the onset the American infantry was opposed by British Light Horsemen as well as by foot soldiers. The charge of the British Cavalry caused the sturdy patriots to fall back into the treacherous swamp. They were well acquainted with it, but the Cavalry men, who came galloping after them were not at all informed of its morasses and fenny recesses. So eager was their pursuit that they plunged into the swamp at a swift gallop and soon discovered their fatal mistake. From behind the large trees a shower of bullets greeted the unfortunate horsemen and many a steed ran riderless away. At last the carnage was ended. The Americans were victorious. Reliable traditions tell us that some of the British foot soldiers covered their musket-balls with verdigris and so poisoned the Americans wounded by them, that many died who otherwise would have recovered."

"After realizing the impregnable position of Washington on the heights of the Watchung Mountains above Westfield, the British Generals ordered a retreat from this area."

"The British took up their lines of march from Westfield to Amboy, assaulted flank and rear by Scott's Light Horse and Morgan's Rangers. The British encamped the first night at Spanktown (then part of Woodbridge). The next day, harassed as before, they resumed their retreat and arrived at Amboy, from which they departed — leaving New Jersey in possession of the American army."

During the remainder of the war New Jersey was never again so completely over run with British troops and marauders. However, many hostile parties, particularly from Staten Island, entered it for pillage and destruction; Woodbridge being particularly unfortunate in this respect.

The population of the Township of Woodbridge is roughly estimated to have been about 3,000 at the time of the Revolution.

From the number of Woodbridge veterans known to have been in the Service of their Country, it is self evident that patriotism, and love of country was most certainly shown by our early inhabitants. The ratio of servicemen to the entire population of our Township was incredibly high.

CHAPTER XI

REVOLUTIONARY WAR VETERANS

Following is a list of Woodbridge "Continental" and Militiamen Veterans of the Revolution.

	Born	Died
Alston, Thomas	1758	9/09/1850
Bloomfield, Dr. Moses	1729	8/14/1791
Bloomfield, Jonathan	1735	4/01/1810
Barron, John	1760	2/26/1836
Brown, Colonel Benj. A.	1764	1838
Barron, Capt. Ellis	1726	5/27/1807
Brown, John	1751	1/15/1828
Brewster, Timothy		2/06/1837
Bloomfield, Thomas	1752	9/07/1830
Brown, William	1749	3/31/1782
Brown, Thomas	1727	10/28/1783
Clarkson, Randolph	1759	3/13/1833
Clarkson, Jeremiah	1752	3/23/1813
Cutter, Stephen	1747	6/20/1823
Cutter, Campyon	1753	4/28/1832
Crowell, Edward	1759	1800
Crowell, Joseph	1760	3/18/1834
Cutter, Kelsey	1750	3/07/1798
Crow, Colonel Samuel	1741	3/15/1801
Coddington, Joseph	1754	4/30/1806
Coddington, James	1755	3/02/1816
Coddington, Robert	1760	8/15/1833
Cutter, Samuel	1761	5/01/1805
Clarkson, John	1744	8/01/1801
Cutter, Deacon William	1722	3/04/1780
Dally, Samuel	1732	3/11/1784
Edgar, General Clarkson	1756	7/21/1816
Edgar, Thomas	1746	7/31/1812
Edgar, Capt. David	1750	9/06/1810
(The Spirited Cavalryman)		
Edgar, James	1748	1/08/1815
Freeman, Henry	1717	7/16/1784
Freeman, Jonathan	1763	11/10/1843
Freeman, Henry	1760	3/07/1838
Heard, General Nathaniel	1729	10/28/1792
Harriot, George	1720	3/24/1802
Harriot, David	1717	11/05/1792
Harriot, Ephriam	1752	9/15/1833

Hadden, Thomas	1760	7/30/1803
Hadden, Thomas	1736	9/1784
Inslie, John	1746	4/23/1791
Jones, William	1755	4/06/1839
Manning, John	1755	8/22/1832
Manning, Jeremiah	1736	6/10/1803
Martin, William	1756	8/06/1824
Martin, David	1760	2/13/1801
Marsh, Capt. Christopher	1742	10/26/1810
Moores, Daniel	1728	4/28/1792
Noe, Peter	1750	9/02/1819
Noe, John	1722	3/20/1796
Potter, Major Rueben	1717	3/25/1799
Randolph, Capt. N. Fitz	1747	7/23/1780
Randolph, Capt. A. Fitz	1755	4/16/1817
Roe, Reverend Azel	1788	12/02/1815
Paten, Lieut. James	1758	11/06/1816
(Known as the Courageous Scotch Patriot)		
Tappen, Capt. Abraham	1756	9/29/1799

All of the above named Revolutionary War Veterans are interred in the White Church Cemetery. The location of each and every grave is shown in the church yard records.

Also, the following list of Revolutionary War Veterans, in most instances the burial site is unknown.³

Auger, Archibald

Bishop, Shotwell

Bloomfield, James,

resided in Woodbridge, died in Milton.

Bloomfield, Ezekiel

Burwell, Robert,

belonged in Capt. Asher Fitz Randolph's company.

Bloomfield, Nathan,

probably resided near Bonhamtown.

Bloomfield, Sr., Thomas,

called "Continental Tommy"

Bloomfield, Jr., Thomas,

said to have been imprisoned in the Jersey Prison Ship.

Crowell, Evans

Campbell, Dougold,

lived near oak Tree, died in 1809, age 77, burried in Metuchen.

DeCamp, Morris, Sergeant,

wounded in a skirmish on Staten Island, August 23, 1777.

Dunham, Joseph,
 belonged to Capt. Asher Fitz Randolph's company.
 Edgar, William
 Elston, Ambrose
 Freeman, Melanchton, Surgeon,
 died in 1824. Buried at Metuchen.
 Freeman, David
 Forre, Samuel
 Frazze, Henry
 Frazee, Morris
 Fitz, Randolph,
 Family Members: Esteh, Ezekiel, Malachia, Michael, all of
 Capt. Asher Fitz Randolph's company; also, Barzilla, Daniel,
 James, Joseph, Stelle, Phineas, Samuel, Thomas, and
 Jedekiah. The Randolph family was one of the most patriotic
 of the war.
 Gilman, John and Joseph,
 belonged to Capt. David Edgar's Troop of Light Horse
 Gilman, Charles
 Jaquish, Samuel
 Kinsey, Sr., James, also James, Jr., and John
 (an artillery man) and Shadrack.
 Loughberry, Abraham
 Laing, Abram.
 Leonard, Capt. Nathaniel,
 buried in Metuchen.
 Martin, Oliver
 Mo.re, Eliphalet
 Marsh, Ralph
 Martin, Merrick
 a number of Martins were soldiers who lived in Metuchen.
 Pike, Capt. Zebulon
 Ross, Capt. Robert
 buried in the old Metuchen cemetery.
 Ross, John
 Sears or Sayer, Isacac
 Stelle, Capt. Thompson
 Skinner, Capt. Richard
 Stewart, David
 Thorp, Benjamin
 Thornell, Isaac,
 died in 1819, buried at Metuchen
 Thornell, Benjamin
 Willis, Samuel

³“Samuel Dally fought under Washington and was one of the faithful who crossed the ice clogged Delaware River in mid-winter to surprise and defeat the Hessians at Trenton on Christmas Eve, December 24th, 1776. He must also have shared in the victory at Princeton ten days after the Trenton battle. He also shared in the glory of the defeat of the British at the battle of Monmouth.

Samuel's son, Jeremiah, ran away from home when only fourteen or fifteen years of age to enter the Colonial Army. He was in the Battle at Connecticut Farms and Springfield in 1780.”

The reader should be acquainted with the fact that during the Revolutionary War Period, Metuchen, Carteret, Bonhamton, Edison and parts of Rahway were included in the Township of Woodbridge. It follows therefore, that not all the veterans listed would be interred in the area now occupied and known as the Township of Woodbridge.

Although the surrender of Cornwallis, on October 1781, at Yorktown ended the hostilities of the Revolutionary War the actual Articles of Peace were not signed until 1783.

CHAPTER XII

THE CONDITIONS IN WOODBRIDGE AND VICINITY DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

In New Jersey, more than any of the other colonies, the war was as much a civil war as a revolution.

The citizens of wealth sided with the British Crown and were known as Tories or Loyalists. Some of them, throughout the war, supplied the British with information regarding the movements and condition of the Colonial army. In some parts of the Colony they were both numerous and bold. In June 1776, Colonial Militia had to be sent to suppress open violence in what is now Hunterdon County.

At Shrewsbury, Tories or Loyalists, had refused to form a committee of Inspection, as directed by the Provincial Congress, until they were forced to do so by their neighbors in Freehold and elsewhere and then they gave only lip service.

In Woodbridge as the Revolution became imminent at every gathering of the people, whether in the tavern or on the street, or even at church after the hour of service, the aggression of England was the topic of conversation.

3“On Wednesday, April 23, 1775, the town was stirred to its depths by the news just received at the hands of a mounted courier, who had torn through the streets on his way to Philadelphia, that the first patriot blood had been shed upon the green at Lexington, Massachusetts on April 19, 1775. The people gathered about the public places to discuss this latest, ominous news.

Within three months, the evidence of war appeared in the village; committees of correspondence and safety were organized, that of Woodbridge being particularly active; the young men were trained in the use of arms; and preparation on every side for war was made.

On the 17th of the following January, 1776, these men marched forth from Woodbridge for their first task of actual fighting. Although after six weeks, they returned having experienced nothing more serious than a few hostile meetings with the Tories or Loyalists of Long Island, yet it was borne home to Woodbridge that war with all its horrors had begun.

Across the waters of the Kill van Kull, Woodbridgeites could see the hills of Staten Island dotted with the white tents of the great English army which had abandoned Boston and henceforth made this neighborhood the center of their action during the whole of the war. For seven years they made this peaceful village the scene of the most terrible suffering witnessed in any part of the colonies.

During the summer of 1776, the disheartening accounts of the battles of Long Island, White Plains and Fort Washington with their sad results to the American armies followed each other in quick succession.

The American army in retreat came nearer and nearer to Woodbridge and even hastened past the town to Trenton and across the Delaware. In its wake came the exultant English and the wild Hessians, who were ready to exercise the rights of the victors and to despoil both the land and the people; and when soon after their defeat at Trenton and Princeton, the English were driven back to the eastern part of the State, it only made the condition of those dwelling in Woodbridge still more sad. The enemy dwelt during the winter of 1776-1777 in the neighborhood, a number of them, five regiments, were encamped in the village of Woodbridge. The villagers suffered much from fear, foraging and personal molestation.

During this winter, the British came on one occasion to a house, and being informed that two of the sons of the family were in the American army, they took possession of six horses, thirty head of cattle and fifty sheep. They left an old grey horse and wagon and told the family to load it with the beds, furniture and the children and gave them just enough time to leave before setting fire to the home. At another time, a sick man was taken from his bed, placed on horseback behind a cavalry man and taken to the British encampment.

In the summer of 1777, the British withdrew to Staten Island, and the patriots were again in nominal control of this region; yet but a few miles of level country separated Woodbridge from their enemies, whose tents could be seen upon the heights of Staten Island. From this summer until the end of the war, Woodbridge and vicinity were in daily danger of attacks, either by night or by day from the foraging parties of the British.

General Livingston, in a speech before the assembly in 1777, declared that the British soldiers in New Jersey made war upon decrepit age and defenseless youth; plundered foes and friends, destroying public records, disfiguring private dwellings and profaning edifices dedicated to almighty God.

Dunlap, the Art Historian - then a small boy, thus describes the scenes witnessed at Woodbridge upon one of these occasions. "The men of the village retired upon the approach of the enemy and some women and children were left. I heard their lamentations as the British soldiers carried off their furniture, scattering the feathers of their beds to the winds, piling up everything - pans, mirrors, etc. The soldiers would then place a female camp follower as a guard upon the spoils while they returned to add to the treasure".

General Greene, in writing to his wife from New Jersey, says of the suffering of the inhabitants, "Tories are the cursedist rascals among us, and most wicked, villainous and oppressive. They lead the relentless followers to the houses of their neighbors and strip the poor women and children of everything they have to eat and wear; and many even of the mothers and daughters have been sacrificed in the presence of their fathers and sons." That this language is not overdrawn the following report of a Congressional Committee made on the eighteenth of April 1777 to the Continental Congress says, "there is the most wanton destruction of property particularly in Newark, Elizabeth, Woodbridge and the neighborhood."

Above all places of worship; Ministers and other religious persons of certain sects seem to have been treated with the most rancorous hatred and the highest contempt.

In the year 1779, a party of the Hessians were so incensed against the natives for offering any resistance to their plundering, that not only did dwellings, churches and common people alike fall prey to the frenzied soldiers, but no weak or unfortunate woman was saved from their vengeful slaughter; for as the troops passed the parsonage of the pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Elizabethtown, one of the Hessians jumped over the fence and pointing his gun in the window, deliberately fired two balls through the body of the Pastor's wife. The brutal murder of this estimable lady, who was the mother of nine young children caused a great cry of horror through the entire State.

The pastor of the First Presbyterian Church (The Old White Church) on Rahway Avenue, Woodbridge, the Rev. Azel Roe was harassed by the British troops. The British despised him because of his verbal denunciations of their tyranny and because of the fact that he led a detachment of Woodbridge Militia men against them on one of their forays into Woodbridge area from their camp on Staten Island. After many attempts, always in the dead of night, the Reverend Roe was captured and taken to the infamous Sugar House Prison in New York City.

Like their fellow Jerseymen, the inhabitants of Woodbridge experienced the only passion, which animated them, Fear. They yielded with a sort of apathy to what was asked of them; both their countenances and emotions had lost every trace of ambition and feeling. Their features were smoothed not into serenity, but apathy; and instead of being settled into an attitude of quiet, their countenances indicated that which was quiet had left their minds altogether.

Their houses were scenes of desolation, their furniture was plundered or broken, the walls and floors were injured, and were

not repaired because they had not the means to repair, and because they were exposed to a repetition of the same injury. Their cattle were gone, their enclosures were burned, and their fields were covered with a rank growth of weeds and grass.

One writer states that amid this desolation nothing struck him more forcible than the sight of a highway where he had heretofore seen a succession of horses and carriages travelling along. Not a single, solitary traveller was seen from week to week or from month to month. The world seemed motionless and silent except when one of these unhappy people ventured upon a rare and lonely excursion to a house of a neighbor equally unhappy, or a scouting party alarmed the inhabitants of new injuries and sufferings.

In another similar account, likewise from eye witness, we read a large proportion of the owners having abandoned their farms, the few that remained found it impossible to harvest.

Numerous instances have been related of the enemy subjecting defenseless persons to cruel torture to compel them to deliver up their money, or disclose the place where it had been hidden. It was not uncommon to hang a man by the neck until apparently dead and then restore him, and repeat the experiment and leave him for dead.

Mary Dally, wife of Samuel, was part of the time left at home with none to cheer her solitude but her little ones; her older son, Jeremiah, had gone to war contrary to the wishes of his parents. He did not relish being left to attend the farm while the other boys and young men in the neighborhood had hastened to the field of conflict. In one instance, Mary narrowly escaped death while alone with her young children. She was leaning out of an upper window watching with anxiety the progress of a skirmish near the house between a body of British and a body of Colonial troops. The latter were victorious. The British retreated toward Amboy. In doing this they passed Mary's house: she had scarcely withdrawn from the window when a rifle ball from one of the retreating party fractured the casement and striking the opposite wall, fell to the floor. When some of the American stopped to refresh themselves with a drink of buttermilk, the patriotic Mary handed the bullet to one of them who promised to send it back among the retreating "Red Coats" and he did and but what execution it effected was impossible to tell.

The history of Woodbridge is full of similar incidents. To record them all would take too much time. "For the time being", says a local historian (*The Story of an Old Farm*), New Jersey was a captured province. The cruelties perpetrated upon the inhabitants by the camping army were such as to greatly increase the feeling of hatred toward the British rule. The sufferings of the people were not only caused by their being forced to impoverish themselves in furnishing bullets and forage to the British, but by such marauding

and plundering by the troops as would have disgraced the followers of an Eastern Satrap. General Howe's British Army was at this time given up to indiscriminate and universal thievery. The officer not only countenanced the outrage but participated as well. The attempts to injure and degrade the people of this part of the country did not cease until the withdrawal of the British army from Staten Island in 1783.

One should not get the idea that the people of Woodbridge passively stood by and exerted no effort to combat the British during this period of terror.

Woodbridge was actually the scene of fourteen skirmishes between the British soldiers and the local militia. The role of the "Jersey Blues" has already been recorded in this narrative.

At last came the dawn of peace. The surrender of British General Cornwallis at Yorktown on October 19, 1781 concluded the war. The swords and sights of war ended; and then began a period of rest, contentment and progress; a period of constant progression which helped build our nation to what it is today.

The new spirit of the times is so ably expressed by Joseph Stansbury, (1742-1809) in his poem "The United States" (1783).

*Now this war at length is o'er
Let us think of it no more,
Every party lie or name,
Cancel as our mutual shame.
Bid each wound of faction close,
Blushing we were ever foes.*

*Now restored to peace again
Active commerce plows the main;
All the arts of civil life
Swift succeed to martial strife;
Britian now allows their claim,
Rising empire, wealth and fame.*

CHAPTER XIII
A COPY OF WOODBRIDGE CHARTER.
CHARTER GRANTED TO THE
TOWNE OF WOODBRIDGE
JUNE 1st., 1669

This Deed Bearing date of the first day of June, in the yearr of our Lord 1669 and in the 21st yearr of the Raigne of our Sovrn. Lord Charles by the Grace of God of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland King, Defender of Faith, etc.

Witnesseth of the Charter Granted to the towne and freeholders of Woodbridge, in the province of New Cesaroa or New Jersey by Captt. Philip Carteret Esqr., Governor of said Province and his Councell under the Right Honorable John Lord Berkley, Baron of Stratton and Sr. George Carteret Knight and Baronet the absolute Lords proprietors of the same, contayning the limits and bounds of the Jurisdiction of the said Towne together with the immunities and privileges thereunto belonging and appertayning as followeth:

Imprs., the bounds of the aforesaid towne of Woodbridge is to begin on the east Side from Arthur Cull River, otherwise called the Sound, at the Going in to Rawack River, and to goe up the said River as hye as the tyde flows, to a fresh brook that runs West-north west, where there stands a beach tree that is marked on the fower sides of it, from thence it extends upon a direct west lyne through a great Swamp and through two other small swamps till it comes to a walnut stake that is pitched upon the plaine marked with two notches and a crosse, which is from the said beach tree Five miles and a halfe; From which stake it extends upon a South Lyne through another Great Swamp called Dismall to the Raratons River: In length seaven miles and a halfe, Butting withing tenn chaines to the westward of two Red Clifts that stands on ye other side of the said River called turne about, which said lyne comes betweene two black oakes that stands at th entering in of the meadows, within a Rod the One from the other, where a stake is planted betweene them, which said oakes are marked upon each of ym with three nothces about brest hye, and a notch on all the fower sides of each of the said trees on the lower part of the stump near the ground and a Cross upon each tree above the uppermost notches. From which said stake betweene the two trees there is two stakes more pitcht in the Meadow answering to the bounds before mentioned on the other side of the aforesaid River, Bering butted and bounded on the East side by the Arthur Cull River, otherwisid called the Sound that parts Staten Island and the Maine; On the

North side by the bounds belonging to New Piscataway. And on the South Side by the aforesaid Raratans River, may morr at Large appears by a draught made by the Survayor Generall hereunto Annexed. The whole said Tract of Upland and meadows being Valewed and Esteemed by the Surveyor Generall, allowance being given for Waistland and hye wayes to containe six miles square, which amounts to twenty three thousand and fourty acres, English measure.

Which said limits and bounds together with all Rivers, ponds, Creeks, Islands, Inlets, Bays, Fishing, Hawking, Hunting and all other appurtenances whatsoever thereunto belonging, and Appertayning, (The halfe part of Golde and Silver Mynes and the Royalties of the Lords proprietors only excepted) to continue and Remaine with the Jurisdiction, Corporation or towneship of the said towne of Woodbridge from the day of the date hereof and for ever; Thye submitting themselves to the Authority of the Lords proprietors and the Government of the said province. To be holden by them, the said Corporation or Township their heirrs and successors as of the manner of Eastern Greenwich in free and common soccage.

Secondly: The said Corporation or township called by the name of Woodbridge shall consist of at least sixty families and as many more as they shall think fitt, which Families shall be accounted as the associates and freeholders of the aforesaid corporation or towneship, which said freeholders or the major part of them are equally to divide the aforesaid tract of upland and meadows amongst them selves by first, second and third lotts, or as they can otherwise agree upon. (Provided that Amboy point be reserved to be disposed by the Lords proprietors towards the thousand acres of upland and Meadow, (that is reserved by the first Articles made before the settling of the said township) to their use, in law of the seventh part mentioned in the Concessions. And when settled to pay all rates equall with other plantations, which Land being so divided and agreed upon by all or the Major part of the said Freeholders, the same is to be entered upon Record by the Secretary or Recorder Generall of the province, and also a Record thereof to be kept in the towne book of Records together with every perticular man's name of his allotment that he is to have; Which being done, the Survayar Generall is by Warrant from the Governor to survey, butt and bound every perticular man's allotment and to bring the same to remaine upon the file in the Secretarie's office, that recourse may be thereunto had on all occasions. And for the more securitie of every man's Right, and the Lords proprietors interest, every perticular man is hereby obligaed to holde his Land by pattent from the Lords proprietors and to pay to them, their heirrs,

successors, or assigns, as an acknowledgement, or by Rent yearly, on every 25th day of March according to the English accompt, the sum of one halfe penny of good and Lawfull money of England, or the value thereof in good and Currant pay of the country, for every Acre that shall be so pattented, which said payment, is to begin on the 25th day of March 1670 and so to continue for ever. Which said rent is to be paid within the province, to the Receiver Generall without any charge to the Lords. Alwayes provided that iff the aforesaid Freeholders shall willfully neglect to pattennt their proportions of Land as aforesaid, then it shall and may be Lawfull for the said Lords proprietors, their heirrs, successors, or assigns to dispose of the same as they shall think fit. As also of all such proportions of land as shall remaine unpattented according to the aforesaid survey, unless the said Corporation or Towneship will answere the Rent as aforesaid and pattennt the same within three yeares from the day of the date hereof. And that all Lands so surveyed, pattented and recorded as aforesaid is to Remaine to them, their heires, Executors administrators or Assignes for ever, And after Seaven years in the possession the said land is not upon any pretense whatsoever to be resurveyed nor the bounds altered, but to remaine and continue according to the first survey forever. And moreover that all bargaines, sales and transports of land, Howse or Howses from one man to another, And all leases for land, Howse or Howses made or Granted to any Tennant for above the space of one year shall be acknowledged by the Grantor before the Governor or Justice of Peace, or by two sufficient witnesses attested on the back side of the said Deeds or Leases or so to be recorded by the Secretary or Recorder Generall as aforesaid to avoid all Controversies in Law; for Neglect whereof all such bargains, and sales, transports or leases are to be void and of no effect in Law.

Thirdly: That the Freeholders aforesaid or the Major part of them have power to chuse their owne Magistrates to be assistants to the president or Judge of the court and for the ordering of all public affaires within the said Jurisdiction, they have power to likewise to nominate their Justice or Justices of Peace and their Militarie officers, Provided that the Justices of the peace and Military officers are to be approved of, and commissioned by the Governor: They have also power Annually on the first day of January, or at any other sett tyme to chuse one or more Constables for the public services, all which said officers are to Sworne in their places and offices.

Fourthly: That they have power by the pluralitie of voises of the freeholders and freemen of the said Corporation to chuse their owne Minister or Ministers for the Service of God and the

Administering of His Holy Sacraments, and being so chosen, inducted and admitted, all persons as well as the freeholders, as others the freemen and inhabitants admitted in the said Corporation or towneship shall contribute according to their estates for his Maintenance, toward which charge there shall be two hundred Acres of good upland and Meadow laid out, to the use and behoofe of the Same Minister, and one hundred acres more for the maintenance of a free shcoole, which said Land shall not be allionated, but shall remaine from one Incombant to another for ever. Which said land together with the land for the building of a Church, Church-yard, schoole-howse, market-place and the like shall be exempted from paying the Lord's Rent of a halfe penny pr. Acre, or any other rate of taxes whatsoever for ever. Notwithstanding it shall and may be Lawfull for any of the said Freeholders and inhabitants aforesaid that are of a different judgment in Matters of Religion to Maintaine any other Minister or Ministers at their own Cost and charges without being Molested or Disturbed for the same.

Fifthly: That the said Corporation or towneship have power to erect and ordaine a Court of Judicature within their owne Jurisdiction and the Limits therof for the Tryall of all causes actionable between party and party from whence there shall be no appeale, under the sum of five pounds starling. And also for the tryall of all Criminalls and causes of Misdemeanor, and to Indict such fines (not exceeding the sum of tenn pounds) and punishments as the Merrit of the Cause shall Require, as by imprisonment, stocking, pilloring, ducking, whipping (not exceeding twenty stripes) and the Like. Which court is to consist of a president (whose is to be a Justice of the Peace) and of the Magistrates or any two of them at the least, a Clerke and such other officers as they shall appoint. Which said Magistrate and Clerke are to be sworne in their offices. And the Clerke is to be approved by the Secretary Generall of the Province whoe is to keep an exact Record of all Actions that shall be brought in and tryed in the said Court, and to give an accompt thereof Unto him, when there unto Required by the Governor and his Councill. No freeholder is to be arrested or detayned for debt, until judgment be passed and execution granted, unless it can be made appeare that the party has an interest to defraud his Creditors, by running out of the Country. That all persons, as well as freeholders as other inhabitants, in case of appeale, the appellant shall give in security to prossocute his appeale or to stand to the Judgement of the Court, all causes according to the Laws of England shall be tryed by a Jury of six or twelve men, and whomsoever shall trouble and molest his neighbour, being of the same Corporation by arresting of him and

going to law in another Jurisdiction shall be layable to a fine according to the discretion of the Court. The Justice or Justices of the Peace being commissioned and sworne, in their office have power to administer the oath of allegiance and fidelity and all other oaths that are required according to Law. And to ishue out in his Maj'ties name, or in whoesr name or names it shall or may be appointed by the Laws, their Warrants of summons and arrest within the Limitts and jurisdiction of the said Corporation or towneship. Directing the same to the Constable, Marshall or to what other officer or officers the said Corporation shall in their discretion think fitt to appoint for that service; whose are to putt the same in Execution accordingly. And also to ishue out their Warrants for the apprehending of all Male-factors and Runaways and to prosecute them by way of Hew and Cry. And to doe all such thing and things by their Authority Agreeable to Law and Justice as may conduce to the peace and Well-Government of the said Corporation or towneship. Provided that all fines are to be disposed of for charitable or public uses.

Sixthly: That in Matters of Religion and the Worship of God there is Liberty of Conscience granted to all persons as well to the freeholders as to all others that are or shall be Admitted inhabitants within the said Corporation or Township, They taking or subscribing to the Oathe of Allegiance to the King, and Fidelity to the Lords Proprietors. And that no person whatsoever shall be molested, injured or troubled for his or her difference in opinion in matters of Religion. Provided that this Liberty Granted shall not extend to Licentiousness nor to the distrubance of others and the public peace.

Seventhly: That the freeholders and inhabitants of the said Corporation or Towneship, shall have a free trade allowed them, and that no tax of Custome Excise or any other imposition whatsoever shall be imposed on them but such, as shall be Levied by the Governor Council and Generall Assembly for the Maintenance of the Government and for the defraying of the publicq charge.

Eightly: That in case of Invasion or Insurrection by ye Indians, or others, they are Mutually to joine with all other townes and plantations within the said Province for the defence and safety of the same. But no Warr to be levied without the consent of the Governor, Councill, and Generall Assembly.

Ninthly: That the freeholders aforesaid, or the Major part of them, are, upon the Governors summons to make choice of two deputies to joyne with the General Assembly, for the making of Laws and Carrying on the publicq affairs of the whole province.

Tenthly: The freeholders and inhabitants aforesaid are to submit themselves to the Lawes and Government of this Province, and to sware or subscribe to the Oath of Allegiance to the King and fidelity to the Lords Proprietors, their Heires, and Successors; and in case they or any of them have a desire to remove and transplant themselves to any other place, they have Liberty so to doe, and to dispose of their Lands and Estate to their best advantage.

Eleventhly: And Lastly. It is here to be understood that the Major part of the said freeholders have power to admit of their owne Inhabitants, (Excepting the land belonging to the Lords proprietors) and to order and carry on all other affairs as may be for the good, advantage, and Well-Governing of the said Corporation or towneship. Provided that all things be down accordng to Equity and Justice, and the Laws of the Province.

Whereas it is said in the second Article provided that Amboy point be reserved toward the thousand Acres of Upland and Meadow that is reserved to be disposed of by the Lords proprietors, (in lew of the seaventh part mentioned in the Concessions) It is to be understood and about Amboy point, as is now surveyed by the Survayor Generall: and for the hundred acres of meadow is to be laid out by the said Survayor in the most convenients place neerest, adjacent to the said Amboy Point. In Confirmation of all the aforesaid, demised premisses. Wee the Governor and Councel aforesaid have hereunto subscribed and affixed the Seale of the Province, the day and Yearr first above Written.

ph: Carteret

Ja Bollen

*Robert Vanquellin
William Pardon
Robert Bond
Nicolas Ver hett
Samuel Edsall*

*Orig. Rec., as certified, post; Elizabethtown
Bill in Chancery, pp. 31-2 and, E. J.
Under the Prop., pp. 42 and 184.*

REFERENCES:

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2. Col. Malcolm G. Gilman M.D. Colts Neck, N.J.
3. Dally's "Woodbridge and Vicinity"
4. Eugene Monette "Ye Planations of Piscataway and Woodbridge Townships"
5. Record of Township of Woodbridge, Janet Gage Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.
6. History of Woodbridge from Leon McElroy's material
7. N.J. Pharmaceutical Assoc. 1870-1970

